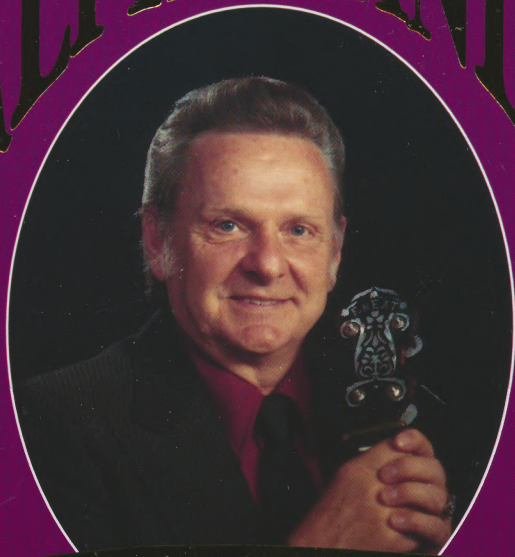


# RALPH STANLEY



50th Anniversary

COLLECTION

# RALPH STANLEY



- |                                    |                                |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Little Birdie                    | 14 Bootleg John                |
| 2 Hemlocks And Primroses           | 15 I've Got A Mule To Ride     |
| 3 Old Richmond Prison              | 16 Old-Time Pickin'            |
| 4 Hard Times                       | 17 Gloryland                   |
| 5 Children Go Where I Send Thee    | 18 Daniel Prayed               |
| 6 Green Pastures In The Sky        | 19 Beautiful Star Of Bethlehem |
| 7 Flood Of '57                     | 20 Man Of Constant Sorrow      |
| 8 I'll Just Catch A Train And Ride | 21 Memory Of Your Smile        |
| 9 Room At The Top Of The Stairs    | 22 Gold Watch And Chain        |
| 10 Clinch Mountain Backstep        | 23 I Just Saw The Rock Of Ages |
| 11 I'll Wear A White Robe          | 24 Travelling The Highway Home |
| 12 Snap A Finger, Jesus            | 25 Little Glass Of Wine        |
| 13 Hills Of Home                   |                                |

Mastered by: Dave Glasser - AirShow, Inc. - Springfield, VA  
 Photography by: Lynwood Atkins - Roanoke, VA  
 Art direction and design: Rebecca Pittard  
 Production coordinator: Gary B. Reid



© & © 1995 Rebel Records  
 P. O. Box 3057 · Roanoke, VA 24015



22 **Gold Watch And Chain**

Ralph Stanley - banjo and tenor vocals, **Roy Lee Centers** - guitar and lead vocals,  
**Ricky Lee** - lead guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass

Recorded at: Roy Homer and Associates - Clinton, MD · Engineer: Roy Homer · Date: March 23, 1973

23 **I Just Saw The Rock of Ages**

*John B. Preston (Markyle Music - BMI)*

Ralph Stanley - banjo and tenor vocals, **Keith Whitley** - guitar and lead vocals, **Troy "Renfro" Profitt** - guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Danny Marshall** - mandolin, **Jack Cooke** - bass

Recorded at: Lemco Sound Studio - Lexington, KY · Engineer: Cecil Jones · Date: May 12, 1977

24 **Travelling The Highway Home**

*Frankie Bailes - Walter Bailes (Acuff-Rose Music, Inc. - BMI)*

Ralph Stanley - banjo and tenor vocals, **Keith Whitley** - guitar and lead vocals, **Troy "Renfro" Profitt** - guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Danny Marshall** - mandolin, **Jack Cooke** - bass and baritone vocals

Recorded at: Lemco Sound Studio - Lexington, KY · Engineer: Cecil Jones · Date: May 12, 1977

25 **Little Glass Of Wine**

*Carter Stanley - Ralph Stanley*

*(Ft. Knox Music - BMI/Trio Music - BMI/Zap Publishing Co. - BMI)*

Ralph Stanley - banjo and lead vocals, **Charlie Sizemore** - guitar, **Junior Blankenship** - guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass

Recorded at: Maggard Studios - Big Stone Gap, VA · Engineer: Alan Maggard · Date: December 1981

---

Mastered by: Dave Glasser - AirShow, Inc. - Springfield, VA

Photography by: Lynwood Atkins - Roanoke, VA

Art direction and design: Rebecca Pittard

Production coordinator: Gary B. Reid

---



© & © 1995 REBEL RECORDS  
P. O. Box 3057 · Roanoke, VA 24015



REB-1996

Throughout the fifty years that Ralph Stanley of Dickenson County, Virginia, has been earning his living playing and singing old-time music -- a half century that this retrospective album has been produced to commemorate -- one of the hallmarks of his career has been his independence. This quality is evident in all his professional activities -- his choice of material, his musical arrangements, his business dealings, his relationship with the public -- but perhaps there is nothing in which it stands out more clearly than in the way he handles his recording sessions.

An example: in 1973, Stanley was invited by country singer Gene Parsons, who had recently signed with Warner Bros. Records, to join him in singing the chorus to a Stanley Brothers song he was recording for his new album, *Kindling*. The invitation entailed an all-expenses-paid cross-country flight to California. For a single song. Stanley was delighted to accept, while at the same time flabbergasted by the extravagance of the arrangement. Understandably so, since it could not have stood in starker contrast to the conditions under which he has done his recordings, not only at that date but throughout the twenty-five years covered by this collection.

"It was all very unspectacular," said former lead singer Charlie Sizemore, reminiscing recently about his own period of recording with Stanley in the late seventies and early eighties. "Ralph would have a work tape of a song. It might be some old preacher singing it or it might be some band singing it or it might be, you know, just a tape that the song was on. And I would type up the lyrics to it and bring them to the rehearsal, so we'd have something to go by. And Ralph did that a fair amount, too. He would type the lyrics or hand write them. He can hand write them so you can read them, since he actually comes from a time when people knew how to write.

"Then at some point he would say, it might be a week or two weeks in advance or sometimes it was real close, he would say, 'Boys, we're going to record Wednesday. You guys come up to the house Tuesday night and we'll go over these songs.' And we'd come up on Tuesday night and we'd be there at the dining room table with a little cassette recorder sitting there on top of the table and we'd

fiddle around with a song till we thought we had it right. Ralph would generally not do a lot of playing. I think he did this more for the singing. He wanted to hear the singing back, you know?

"So we would just sing and play into that recorder. And then we would listen to it back and if something was out of whack we would know it. Otherwise we would just go on to the next song and we'd go through twelve songs. And then next morning we'd go in and record."

Earlier in his solo career, which began in 1966 with the death of his brother and musical partner Carter, Ralph Stanley recorded most often in Clinton, Maryland, a suburb of Washington, D.C. But after a while, in a way that paralleled the increasing traditionalism of his musical style, he took to working more and more in small mountain studios that were closer to his home in southwest Virginia: in Ashland, Kentucky, for instance, or Crum, West Virginia, or, perhaps more often than any other place in recent years, the Maggard Sound Studio in Big Stone Gap, Virginia.

Typically, Maggard's is an unprepossessing place; from the outside it looks exactly like a simple two-car garage. Also, typically, it is run by an old friend of Ralph Stanley's. He and his son do the engineering. When Stanley's band is recording there is no producer and no A&R man. The recording is done "live," with the band members playing and singing together as they do on the stage, rather than laying down separate tracks one at a time in the Hollywood or Nashville style. After five or six hours of very intense work, starting usually about midday, the dozen songs that make up a standard album are complete.

When the last song is finally done it is time for a supper break. If the band is at Maggard's this will take place a few blocks away, in downtown Big Stone, where a cafeteria has been set up in what was once a Piggly-Wiggly store. In the mid-eighties the price here for an all-you-can-eat buffet supper was \$4.76.

The mix-down takes place back at the studio after supper. It is generally quite rapid, since the engineer is familiar with Stanley's needs and wishes. But even if it takes until 3 A.M., it will be done that night, and the master tape will be off to the record company the next morning.

Most often all this takes place in the wintertime: off season for a bluegrass performer, the easiest time to fit a recording session into a busy road schedule. A

neighbor of Maggard's looking out a front window around noon on a recording day would see Ralph Stanley pulling up alone in an old sedan. He parks by the side of the road and steps out, picking his way carefully through the patches of snow and slush on the road. He goes back to his trunk, opens it, and pulls out his banjo. He closes his trunk and, carrying the banjo, walks alone across the road and up the path to the studio, where those of the band who have already arrived are inside tuning and waiting.

There is no limousine, no entourage, no red carpet, no caterers, no executives, no handlers, no bells and no whistles. It is all very unspectacular.

Except, of course, the results. All fifty years' worth.

### John Wright

author, *Traveling the High Way Home:  
Ralph Stanley and the World of Traditional  
Bluegrass Music*

#### 1 Little Birdie

*Traditional - P. D.*

**Ralph Stanley** - banjo and lead vocals, **Roy Lee Centers** - guitar, **Ricky Lee** - lead guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass

Recorded at: Roy Homer and Associates - Clinton, MD · Engineer: Roy Homer · Date: March 22, 1973

#### 2 Hemlocks And Primroses

**Ralph Stanley** - banjo and lead vocals, **Keith Whitley** - guitar, **Danny Marshall** - lead guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass

Recorded at: Track Recorders - Silver Spring, MD · Engineer: Ronald Freeland · Date: February 16, 1976

#### 3 Old Richmond Prison

*Emmett Barton, Jr. - James Roy Barton (Jaclyn Music - BMI)*

**Ralph Stanley** - banjo and tenor vocals, **Charlie Sizemore** - guitar and lead vocals, **Junior Blankenship** - guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass

Recorded at: Maggard Studios - Big Stone Gap, VA · Engineer: Alan Maggard · Date: April 2, 1986

#### 4 Hard Times

*Ralph Stanley (Zap Publishing Co. - BMI)*

**Ralph Stanley** - banjo, **Roy Lee Centers** - guitar, **Ricky Lee** - lead guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass

Recorded at: Roy Homer and Associates - Clinton, MD · Engineer: Roy Homer · Date: March 22, 1973

#### 5 Children Go Where I Send Thee

**Ralph Stanley** - lead vocals, **Keith Whitley** - baritone vocals, **Jack Cooke** - tenor vocals

Recorded at: Roy Homer and Associates - Clinton, MD · Engineer: Roy Homer · Date: March 1975

#### 6 Green Pastures In The Sky

*Osburn Thorpe (Ozzie Thorpe Music Publisher - BMI)*

**Ralph Stanley** - banjo and lead vocals, **Roy Lee Centers** - guitar, **Ricky Skaggs** - fiddle, **Keith Whitley** - lead guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass

Recorded at: Roy Homer and Associates - Clinton, MD · Engineer: Roy Homer · Date: December 10, 1971

#### 7 Flood Of '57

*Carter Stanley - Ralph Stanley (Acuff-Rose Music - BMI)*

**Ralph Stanley** - banjo and tenor vocals, **Roy Lee Centers** - guitar and lead vocals, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass

Recorded at: Roy Homer and Associates - Clinton, MD · Engineer: Roy Homer · Date: August 31, 1971

#### 8 I'll Just Catch A Train And Ride

**Ralph Stanley** - banjo and tenor vocals, **Charlie Sizemore** - guitar and lead vocals, **Danny Marshall** - mandolin, **Junior Blankenship** - lead guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass and baritone vocals

Recorded at: Lemco Sound Studio - Lexington, KY · Engineer: Cecil Jones · Date: March 29, 1978

#### 9 Room At The Top Of The Stairs

*Randall Hylton (Paul Craft Music - BMI)*

**Ralph Stanley** - banjo and lead vocals, **Charlie Sizemore** - guitar, **Junior Blankenship** - lead guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass

Recorded at: Maggard Studios - Big Stone Gap, VA · Engineer: Alan Maggard · Date: April 2, 1986

10 **Clinch Mountain Backstep**

*Ruby Rakes (Ft. Knox Music - BMI/Trio Music - BMI)*

**Ralph Stanley** - banjo, **Roy Lee Centers** - guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass

Recorded at: Roy Homer and Associates - Clinton, MD · Engineer: Roy Homer · Date: August 31, 1971

11 **I'll Wear A White Robe**

**Ralph Stanley** - lead vocals, **Charlie Sizemore** - baritone vocals, **Jack Cooke** - tenor vocals

Recorded at: Riverside Recording Studio - Crum, WV · Engineer: Jim McCown · Date: March 9, 1979

12 **Snap A Finger Jesus**

*John B. Preston (Markyle Music - BMI)*

**Ralph Stanley** - banjo and tenor vocals, **Ernie Thacker** - guitar and lead vocals, **Hank Smith** - lead guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass

Recorded at: Maggard Studios - Big Stone Gap, VA · Engineer: Alan Maggard · Date: December 5, 1990

13 **Hills Of Home**

*Wendy Smith - Ralph Stanley (Ft. Knox Music - BMI/Trio Music - BMI)*

**Ralph Stanley** - recitation, **Keith Whitley** - guitar and lead vocals, **Ricky Lee** - lead guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass and tenor vocals

Recorded at: Roy Homer and Associates - Clinton, MD · Engineer: Roy Homer · Date: March 1975

14 **Bootleg John**

*Marvin Charles Davis (Lemco Music Publishing Co. - BMI)*

**Ralph Stanley** - banjo and lead vocals, **Keith Whitley** - guitar and baritone vocals, **Danny Marshall** - lead guitar and bass vocals, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - tenor vocals, **Ed Ferris** - bass

Recorded at: Track Recorders - Silver Spring, MD · Engineer: Ronald Freeland · Date: February 16, 1976

15 **I've Got A Mule To Ride**

*Donnie Joe Mullins (Tenpenny Music - BMI)*

**Ralph Stanley** - banjo and tenor vocals, **Charlie Sizemore** - guitar and lead vocals, **Junior Blankenship** - lead guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass

Recorded at: Maggard Studios - Big Stone Gap, VA · Engineer: Alan Maggard · Date: December 1981

16 **Old-Time Pickin'**

*Ralph Stanley (Zap Publishing Co. - BMI)*

**Ralph Stanley** - banjo, **Roy Lee Centers** - guitar, **Ricky Skaggs** - mandolin, **Keith Whitley** - lead guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass

Recorded at: Roy Homer and Associates - Clinton, MD · Engineer: Roy Homer · Date: February 23, 1971

17 **Gloryland**

**Ralph Stanley** - lead vocals, **Roy Lee Centers** - guitar and baritone vocals, **Jack Cooke** - tenor vocals, **Keith Whitley** - bass vocals

Recorded at: Roy Homer and Associates - Clinton, MD · Engineer: Roy Homer · Date: February 23, 1971

18 **Daniel Prayed**

**Ralph Stanley** - banjo and tenor vocals, **Charlie Sizemore** - guitar and lead vocals, **Junior Blankenship** - lead guitar and bass vocals, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass and baritone vocals

Recorded at: Maggard Studios - Big Stone Gap, VA · Engineer: Alan Maggard · Date: February 6, 1985

19 **Beautiful Star Of Bethlehem**

**Ralph Stanley** - banjo and high baritone vocals, **Keith Whitley** - guitar and lead vocals, **Troy "Renfro" Profit** - lead guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass and tenor vocals

Recorded at: Lemco Sound Studio - Lexington, KY · Engineer: Cecil Jones · Date: May 12, 1977

20 **Man Of Constant Sorrow**

*Traditional - P. D.*

**Ralph Stanley** - banjo and lead vocals, **Roy Lee Centers** - guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass

Recorded at: Roy Homer and Associates - Clinton, MD · Engineer: Roy Homer · Date: August 31, 1971

21 **The Memory Of Your Smile**

*Ruby Rakes (Ft. Knox Music - BMI/Trio Music - BMI)*

**Ralph Stanley** - banjo and tenor vocals, **Charlie Sizemore** - guitar and lead vocals, **Junior Blankenship** - lead guitar, **Curly Ray Cline** - fiddle, **Jack Cooke** - bass

Recorded at: Maggard Studios - Big Stone Gap, VA · Engineer: Alan Maggard · Date: December 1981

# RALPH STANLEY

50th Anniversary

Collection



©1995 Malster & Schreyer

COMPACT  
**disc**  
DIGITAL AUDIO



© 1995  
REBEL RECORDS  
PO Box 3057  
Roanoke, VA 24015

REB-1996